

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06
OMB-01 AID-05 AGRE-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 CEA-01 CIEP-01
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01 INT-05 L-03 PM-04
SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 ACDA-07 PA-01 PRS-01 /124 W
-----120455Z 012794 /22

R 110915Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2838

INFO CINCPAC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL MANDALAY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DEA BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0098

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: JOINT WEEKA #1, JANUARY 3-11

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1. APPARENT SLOWDOWN IN POPPY DESTRUCTION CAMPAIGN (LOU)
FOLLOWING INITIAL EFFORTS IN THE CHIN HILLS AND IN AREAS
AROUND TAUNGGYI, CENTRAL SHAN STATE, CIVILIAN AND MILITARY
OPERATIONS TO DESTROY OPIUM POPPIES HAVE APPARENTLY TAPERED OFF.
IN VIEW OF THE SUCCESSES DURING THE LAST GROWING SEASON AND
SEVERAL SELF-CONGRATULATORY PIECES IN THE PRESS, WE HAD

EXPECTED THAT THE GUB WOULD BE AGRESSIVELY PURSUING THE CROP DESTRUCTION PROGRAM THIS SEASON. WITH THE HARVEST APPROACHING IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS IN MANY AREAS, THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT AFFORD TO WAIT MUCH LONGER IF IT HOPES TO MAKE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON THIS YEAR'S OPIUM PRODUCTION. PROBABLE EXPLANATION: MILITARY UNITS HAVE BEEN SO WRAPPED UP IN PREPARATIONS FOR THE FEBRUARY BSPP PARTY CONGRESS THAT MOST OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN PUT OFF PENDING THE COMPLETION OF OBLIGATORY PARTY ACTIVITIES.

2. PADDY CROP OUTLOOK REMAINS GOOD (UNCL)

RECENT UNSEASONAL RAINS IN BURMA'S DELTA AREA (WEEKA #52, ITEM 1) DID LESS DAMAGE TO THE RICE PADDY CROP THAN ANTICIPATED. GUB AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS STATED THAT THE RAINS WERE LIGHT IN MOST AREAS AND THE SOAKED PADDY CAN BE DRIED AND RECOVERED. ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICIALS, THE RAIN DAMAGE AFFECTED THE QUALITY MORE THAN THE QUANTITY OF THE PADDY HARVEST. THE GUB MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS MADE A SLIGHT UPWARD REVISION IN ITS ESTIMATE OF PADDY OUTPUT FOR THE PRESENT CROP YEAR, FROM 9,159 MILLION LONG TONS TO 9,168 MILLION LONG TONS.

3. AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH IRRI (UNCL)

ON JANUARY 7 THE GUB AGRICULTURE CORPORATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IRRI) OF LOS BANOS, PHILIPPINES, SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AIMED AT ENHANCING BURMA'S RICE RESEARCH CAPABILITIES AND RICE CROPPING SYSTEM. THE IRRI WILL PROVIDE EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS, EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINING FOR BURMESE PERSONNEL. CONFIDENTIAL

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THE AGRICULTURE CORPORATION IS TO FUND LOCAL RESEARCH COSTS. THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS HAVE NOT YET SET UP DEFINITE PROJECTS OR WORK PLANS.

4. LETPANDO OIL FIELD PRODUCTION STILL INSIGNIFICANT (CONF)

AMCONSUL MANDALAY REPORTS THAT ACCORDING TO AN OIL EXPERT THERE IS STILL ONLY ONE PRODUCING WELL (42 BARRELS A DAY) AT THE LETPANDO OIL FIELD. THIS SOURCE ALSO NOTES THAT SINCE THE STRUCTURE ON WHICH WELLS ARE BEING DRILLED IS SEVERELY FAULTED, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANY SUBSTANTIAL RESERVES WILL BE DISCOVERED.

COMMENT: THE INITIAL HIGH HOPES FOR LETPANDO PRODUCTION (PROJECTED BY THE GUB INITIALLY TO

BE 10,000 BARRELS A DAY) APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN PREMATURE AND UNREALISTIC. UNFORTUNATELY, A PIPELINE FROM LETPANDO TO THE REFINERY AT CHAUK HAS ALREADY BEEN CONSTRUCTED, AND CRUDE STORAGE FACILITIES AND WORKERS' QUARTERS ARE VIRTUALLY COMPLETED. WE UNDERSTAND THT THE NATIONAL

INTELLIGENCE BUREAU IS CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION INTO
THIS FIASCO, AND IT IS EXPECTED THAT A FEW HEADS WILL ROLL
IN THE MYANMA OIL CORPORATION.
OSBORN UNQTE

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